DELAWARE VALLEY COLLEGE

NETWORKING – HOW TO STAND OUT

The Center for Student Professional Development
DRESS THE PART

Wear either business casual or business professional clothing.
What to wear?

This guide demonstrates acceptable Business Professional and Business Casual Attire for your upcoming career events.

NOTE: For interviews, always choose Business Professional attire.
YOUR 30 SECOND SPOT

• A way to introduce yourself
• Market your qualifications
• Request something
What is a “30 Second Spot”?  
For the purpose of professional networking, one of the keys to your success is to make a really strong first impression.  
To do this, you need to create a personal “commercial” It is essentially an overview of your experience, skills, strengths,  
accomplishments and goals all in 30 seconds!

When Will I Use It?  
You will use your 30 second spot throughout your professional life. Some relevant uses include:  
- When introducing yourself to a potential employer at a career fair. 
- At an interview 
- In a cover letter - to highlight your background and key abilities. 
- At professional networking events - when you are asked to introduce yourself. 
- In cold calling employers for an internship or future job.

What Should I Include in My 30 Second Spot?  
1. Who you are 
2. A specific objective 
3. How you have demonstrated your interest (student organizations, any other positions or field related experience) 
4. Why you are qualified 
5. Ask a specific question about their organization/available position(s), based on your research

What Should I Keep in Mind about Developing My 30 Second Commercial?  
PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!  
Your 30 second commercial should be conversational and natural. Although prepared in advance, it should never sound memorized. You want to appear confident, enthusiastic, poised and professional. Make it memorable but not outrageous.  
You are competing with many other qualified candidates. Your commercial should allow you to stand out a bit from the crowd. Whether it is the vocabulary you choose or a specific achievement you mention, you want to engage the listener and give them an opportunity to see your personality. Be prepared for follow -up questions. You may be asked for more information or to elaborate on something you said which will keep the conversation going. Part of your strategy is to develop a rapport with the interviewer and a good introduction and follow-up will help to set a positive tone. Vary your closing to fit the circumstances. At a job fair or networking event you want to be proactive and may want to consider an action question such as “Could you tell me more about the available opportunities?”

Questions to Think About in Developing Your 30 Second Commercial:
1. What is your career goal?  
2. What skill, strength, or experience do you have that would help you accomplish that goal?  
3. What accomplishment proves you have that skill, strength, or experience?  
4. What are you searching for in a job or internship?  
5. How can you benefit the organization?

Starting Your 30-Second Commercial  
1. My name is _______________________________. 
2. I am a ___________ major here at DelVal and I am looking for (type of opportunity). 
3. I have experience/interest/skills in ________, for example _____________. 
4. I feel I could apply these same skills / abilities in your organization. (You’ll have had to do some research on the organization to be able to comment on this!)  
5. Can you tell me more about available opportunities at your organization?
NETWORKING STRATEGIES

Initiate!
• Introduce yourself with a handshake

How to Start the Conversation:
Each person will have a nametag that designates the industry(ies) they identify with. Try something like this: “Hello! My name is ____________, and I see you work in the ____________ (industry) field. I’m a (major) major. I’d love to learn more about your career!”

Include your 30 second spot as you continue the conversation
MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR NETWORKING EXPERIENCE; ASK QUESTIONS!

Could you tell me about your career path?
- What was your first position and what brought you to your current position?
- Why did you choose this field?
- Is there anything you wish you would have done when you were my age?

What parts of your college experience best prepared you for your career?

What was the best decision you made as an undergraduate with respect to your professional life?

Who were your mentors when you first graduated and began your career? What about now?

What types of internships would you recommend if I’d like to break into this industry?

What organizations do you recommend I belong to, and what types of events should I attend?

What does your company (or department) look for in the people they hire?

How did you find and get hired for your current position?

Do you have any specific advice for me, based on my background and experience?

What is a typical day like at your job?
- What are your primary responsibilities?
- With whom do you interact?
- What hours do you work?
ENDING THE CONVERSATION

Ready to move on and chat with some more people? Try this:

“Thank you for chatting with me, it was great to hear about your career. Do you have a business card on you? I’d love to stay in touch.”

Make sure to ask for their business card so that you can follow up with them.
RESUME?

Since the event is primarily focused on networking, you should **not** bring a resume. *If someone asks for your resume, tell them you will email it to them after the event*.

Make sure to ask for business cards (after having some conversation) so that you can follow-up with them for future opportunities.
College Students and Business Cards

College students can use business cards too!

Having a business card as a college student is something most students do not think about – but having a student business card is a good way to impress! Professionals are used to exchanging business cards when they meet someone new. Students should start thinking about themselves as a professional and start preparing like one!

Business Cards - here are a few simple things to include:

1. Contact Information
   a. Name
   b. Phone number (cell phone)
   c. E-mail address. Choose one that you check daily and that is professional!

2. Academic Information
   a. Major
   b. DelVal Class of ______
   c. URL links for LinkedIn, professional blog or twitter (keep it professional!)

3. Creativity and Quality Matter
   a. Print on cardstock paper
   b. Name in large font size

You can print business cards at Vistaprint (250 cards for $10 – free shipping!) or stop by the CSPD to pick up a sheet of blank business card paper.
FOLLOW-UP AFTER THE EVENT

• Remind them of who you are.
  • “We met on Wednesday and discussed….”

• Thank them!
  • “Thank you for your time, I really enjoyed hearing about your career path.”
  • “Thank you for your time, I really enjoyed hearing about your career path after college.”

• Include a “call to action” –
  • “I’d like to stay connected. Please keep me in mind for any internships or open positions. In addition, I am on LinkedIn if you’d like to connect.”
POSSIBLE CALLS TO ACTION

• Informational Interview
• Job Shadow
• Internship
• Part-time job
• Full-time position
FOLLOW-UP AND STAY CONNECTED

• **Check in** with your contacts and update them on your semester
  • New courses, campus events, conferences, workshops, internships, jobs

• **Utilize your contacts for “calls to action”**
  • How can they help you? (Ask for something – nicely! And professionally).
STAY CONNECTED – GET LINKEDIN

- a business-oriented social networking site
- an opportunity:
  - to build a professional identity online
  - discover professional opportunities
  - learn more about your field
BENEFITS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

http://theundercoverrecruiter.com/7-ways-college-students-can-benefit-linkedin/
SO WHAT’S NEXT?

1. Make a profile
2. Find people you know (connect your email address)
3. Ask for recommendations!
   1. Recommend others (and they’ll return the favor)
4. Network with alumni and other professionals
5. Follow companies
6. Join groups
Building a Great Student Profile

Showcase your experience and professional interests on LinkedIn!

1. Write an informative profile headline.
   Your headline is a short, memorable professional slogan. For example, “Honors student seeking marketing position.” Check out the profiles of students and recent alumni you admire for ideas.

2. Pick an appropriate photo.
   LinkedIn isn’t Facebook. Upload a high-quality photo (your profile will be 7x more likely to be viewed) of you alone, professionally dressed. No party shots, cartoon avatars, or puppy pics!

3. Show off your education.
   Include all your schools, major(s) and minor, courses, and study abroad or summer programs. Don’t be shy – LinkedIn is an appropriate place to show off your GPA, test scores, and honors or awards.

4. Develop a professional Summary.
   Your Summary statement is like the first few paragraphs of your best-written cover letter – concise and confident about your qualifications and goals. Include relevant work and extracurriculars.

5. Fill “Skills & Expertise” with keywords.
   This section is the place to include keywords and phrases that recruiters search for. Find relevant ones in job listings that appeal to you and profiles of people who have the kinds of roles you want.
Update your status regularly.
Posting updates helps you stay on your network’s radar and build your professional image. Mention your projects, professional books or articles, or events you’re attending. Many recruiters read your feed!

Collect diverse recommendations.
The best profiles have at least one recommendation for each position a person has held. Recruiters are most impressed by recommendations from people who have directly managed you.

Show your connectedness.
Groups you join appear at the bottom of your profile. Joining some shows that you want to engage in professional communities and learn the lingo. Start with your university and industry groups.

Claim your unique LinkedIn URL.
To increase the professional results that appear when people search for you online, set your LinkedIn profile to “public” and create a unique URL (e.g., www.linkedin.com/in/JohnSmith).

Share your work.
You can also add actual examples of your writing, design work, or other accomplishments on your profile, where you can share rich media or documents. What better way to sell your skills than to show employers exactly what you can produce?

Get a Great Profile.
Get going at www.linkedin.com

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CONNECT WITH ALUMNI

Delaware Valley College Alumni & Student Mentoring / Networking Group

Over 900 members
Sub-groups by major
CONNECTING PROFESSIONALLY ON LINKEDIN

1. How do you know this person?
   - Through a past experience – volunteer, position or job
   - As a student (they are a teacher, professors, staff, etc.)
   - If none of the categories relate to the situation:
     - You can click “Other” and the site will ask for the individual’s email address to verify that you know them (enter it - you have their business card!)
     - Look at the person’s profile and see what groups they are members of on LinkedIn
       - Become a member of one of their groups ONLY if it is relevant to you
       - When you try to connect with the person again, an option will come up to select that you know the individual through a group
CONNECTING ON LINKEDIN

• ALWAYS include a personal note!
  • Use a greeting – “Hello, Good morning, Dear,“
  • Introduce yourself – “Your 30 Second Spot”
  • Is there a purpose in connecting? (A call to action)

• After they accept your invitation – if you do not receive a reply to your personalized message, follow-up with a Thank You message thanking them for connecting with you and to continue the conversation.
Sample LinkedIn Requests

**Informational Interview Request**

Dear Ms. Goodman,

I am a student at Delaware Valley College majoring in Small Animal Science and would like to connect with you on LinkedIn. I found your profile via the Delaware Valley College Mentoring/Networking Group. I see that you are a Veterinarian at Bucks County Emergency Vets. I am very interested in veterinary school and my goal is to work at an emergency hospital or in critical care.

Would you be willing to offer some advice on your industry? I am particularly interested in your veterinary school experience and how you got started in the field. Would you be willing and available to meet with me, perhaps we could meet for coffee on-campus, or available to speak with me on the phone?

Thank you for your time.

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**Internship / Job Shadow Request**

Dear Ms. Goodman,

I am a student at Delaware Valley College majoring in Small Animal Science and would like to connect with you on LinkedIn. I found your profile via the Delaware Valley College Mentoring/Networking Group. I see that you are a Veterinarian at Bucks County Emergency Vets. I am very interested in veterinary school and my goal is to work at an emergency hospital or in critical care.

Are you aware of any internship or job-shadow opportunities at your location or in the field? I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you further if you are available. Would you be willing to meet with me, perhaps we could meet for coffee on-campus, or available to speak with me on the phone?

Thank you for your time.

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**Industry Positions Request**

Dear Ms. Goodman,

I am a graduating senior at Delaware Valley College majoring in Small Animal Science and would like to connect with you on LinkedIn. I will be graduating in May and am very excited to enter the field. I found your profile via the Delaware Valley College Mentoring/Networking Group. I see that you are a Veterinarian at Bucks County Emergency Vets. I am very interested in Veterinary Technician positions and have been applying in the Bucks County region for positions.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you further if you are available. Would you be willing to meet with me, perhaps we could meet for coffee on-campus, or available to speak with me on the phone to offer any insight or guidance on the field?

Thank you for your time.
REMEMBER…

Networking is a two way street.